

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICENATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Chance, Albert Bishop, House and Gardens

AND/OR COMMON

The Chance House

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

319 East Sneed

CITY, TOWN

Centralia

STATE

Missouri

VICINITY OF

CODE

029

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

#8 - Hon. Richard A. Ichord

COUNTY

Boone

CODE

019

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

☐ DISTRICT
☒ BUILDING(S)
☐ STRUCTURE
☒ SITE
☐ OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

☐ PUBLIC
☒ PRIVATE
☐ BOTH
PUBLIC ACQUISITION
☐ IN PROCESS
☐ BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

☒ OCCUPIED
☐ UNOCCUPIED
☐ WORK IN PROGRESS
ACCESSIBLE
☒ YES: RESTRICTED
☐ YES: UNRESTRICTED
☐ NO

PRESENT USE

☐ AGRICULTURE
☐ COMMERCIAL
☐ EDUCATIONAL
☐ ENTERTAINMENT
☐ GOVERNMENT
☐ INDUSTRIAL
☐ MILITARY
☒ MUSEUM
☒ PARK
☐ PRIVATE RESIDENCE
☐ RELIGIOUS
☐ SCIENTIFIC
☐ TRANSPORTATION
☐ OTHER**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Chance Foundation "Boone International"

STREET & NUMBER

Rollins Street

CITY, TOWN

Centralia

VICINITY OF

STATE

Missouri 65240

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTIONCOURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Boone County Court House Recorder of Deeds

STREET & NUMBER

701 East Broadway

CITY, TOWN

Columbia

STATE

Missouri 65201

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

1. Great Gardens in America

DATE

1969

☐ FEDERAL ☐ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Published by: Coward-McCann, Inc.

CITY, TOWN

New York

STATE

New York

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

☒ EXCELLENT
☐ GOOD
☐ FAIR

☐ DETERIORATED
☐ RUINS
☐ UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

☐ UNALTERED
☒ ALTERED

CHECK ONE

☒ ORIGINAL SITE
☐ MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Albert Bishop Chance House in Centralia, Missouri is a two story house with full attic and basement, constructed in the Queen Anne style of design. Its plan is compact, providing easy flow from room to room. The Chance Gardens, located on the northern extreme of the property, provide a fine example of formal gardens designed to fit a compact area.

HOUSE

Exterior. The house faces south and measures 42' along its south side. The porte cochère adds an additional 15' to the east. The east facade measures 83' in length including the porte cochère and the added apartment on the north side. The west side measures 51' and the north is 29' in length.

The Chance House is an exposed frame structure supported by a full, raised basement of red-painted brick. The brick is faced with rock-faced stone, however, under the elaborate chimney to the southwest. The frame is exposed on the exterior around windows, doors, corners and bays, and the entire house is now painted white. Decorative detailing is done in brick, stone and wood, and the house is capped by a combination of ogee-domed, gabled and hipped sections covered with red shingles.

The primary facade of the Chance House is dominated by its broad veranda which ends on the east in a porte cochère. This feature is composed of five red brick pillars which support a boxed cornice with a fasciated frieze capped by a low pitched red shingled roof. In the veranda area a waist-high wall of quarry-faced stone runs between the pillars, joining them. To the east, within the tower at first floor level, four single-sash windows, with leaded transoms and entablature heads, open onto the veranda. To the west is the location of an elaborate chimney which surrounds a round-arched window embellished with stained glass which is capped with heavy, quarry-faced stone voussoirs supported by carved stone pilasters. The actual chimney, which is in the extreme southwest corner, projects skyward a full three stories and is constructed of red brick laid in common bond. The elaborated chimney area is also done in common bond with beige stone detailing along its edges and in panels of raised diaper design within.

The second story of the south facade has an enclosed sun porch immediately west of the southeast tower. The former opening of this porch is adorned with a decorated hood with brackets and has been glazed. To the east, the tower is the location of several transomed windows with entablature heads. Its ogee-domed roof is topped with a copper ball and lotus finial.

Above the denticulated and molded cornice which separates the second story from the attic level, a single pedimented gable with a boxed and denticulated raking cornice encloses three small vents arranged in the Palladian manner with its central member peaked. Another denticulated and molded course runs immediately above, and a decorative panel with a torch and foliage in relief within the gable peak completes the south side of the house.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

CHANCE, ALBERT BISHOP, HOUSE AND GARDENS

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER

7

PAGE

1

The east facade of the house is similar in design to the south. Added embellishment includes a small stained glass window on the north side of the tower. Just north of this a small curving bay projects from the facade, rests on a cul-de-lampe and is capped by a red shingled roof. Piercing this oriel, which corresponds to the location of the interior staircase landing, are three stained glass windows. Further north on this side a large, five-sided bay projects from the house which is reduced to one of three sides as it rises to roof level, pierced by several single sash windows with leaded and stained glass transoms. The east facade is capped by a gabled roof with a raised sunburst design done in wood on the gable peak. In addition, jigsawn adornment with pendants is suspended from the cornice in the corners formed by the outward projection of the bay.

The north facade is a continuation of the design of the rest of the house. The attached garage-apartment masks most of the first story, but a distinctive stained glass window with floral designs is located to the east. At the extreme west on this facade is an enclosed porch which has retained its original receptacles for milk and mail deliveries.

The west facade shares the enclosed porch with the north facade at its north end. Features here include a rounded bay enclosing four windows with leaded and stained glass transoms at first floor level, and an oriel window and smaller stained glass window to the south. In addition, the west side is capped by a gabled roof with a palmette in relief at its peak.

Interior. The Chance House is entered from the south veranda through a solid oak, three paneled door into a small entryway which features a geometrically patterned floor of red, yellow, blue and white round tiles. Engaged oaken columns flank the entryway. To the west is the living room where the original fireplace in the southwest corner has been removed. The woodwork here and elsewhere inside the house is solid oak. Carved lintels embellished with urns and tendrilous garlands are found over both the doors and the windows in the living room, dining room and stairway areas. To the east of the living room through a pair of French doors is the dining room. Both these main rooms feature built-in cupboards, decoratively molded and enclosed behind leaded glass doors. One section of the cupboard in the east wall of the living room pierces the wall so that it can be reached from the dining room as well.

Immediately to the right of the main entryway is a small reception room and the main staircase, both located within the southeast tower. The reception room features decorative, paneled woodwork, a wooden bench below window level and a small stained glass window depicting a harp. The curving oak staircase with spindle balustrade

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED
DATE ENTERED

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

CHANCE, ALBERT BISHOP, HOUSE AND GARDENS

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 2

risers eight steps to the first landing and is flanked by two newel posts, one modeled after a Tuscan column and the other square and adorned with an egg and dart molding. At the landing is a small rounded alcove with three stained glass windows. This area corresponds to the oriel window described on the east facade. The stairs turn 180° at this landing and rise ten steps to the second floor. The exposed exterior string of this section of the stairway is embellished with moldings and sunburst paterae.

The second floor of the Chance House continues the Queen Anne decoration begun on the first floor. The oaken woodwork around the doors and windows here, however, is of a plainer design than that found below.

The attic covers the entire house and is floored with white pine. The tower is semi-finished and has wall boarding, a subfloor and has been adorned with plain moldings.

The basement is semi-finished and is reached by a descending staircase from the kitchen. It is constructed of brick and concrete and runs under the entire house with the exception of the attached garage. Here, the original workshop and tool room of A.B. Chance is just as he left it with his notebook, tools and implements carefully arranged in the myriad of small varnished drawers which line the walls.

ALTERATIONS

Baths have been added in the northwest corner of the former library or den on the first floor and to two of the bedrooms on the second floor. The northeast porch was enclosed at an early date as was the second floor porch to the south, and the kitchen and butler's pantry have been completely modernized. In addition, a fireplace has been added to the north wall of the living room and that in the southwest corner has been removed. After the Chance family acquired the house a garage was added to the rear, the porte cochère was constructed on the south side and the living room and parlor were made into one large room.

GARDENS

Located to the north of the Chance House are the Chance Gardens which were constructed in 1937. Over 300 tons of native stone were hauled from all parts of the state to the small plot which measures only 150' by 154'. Eventually over 700 varieties of plants and flowers were to be found in the garden including 46 varieties of roses, 20 of water lilies and 200 of cactus. In 1970 the gardens were reconstructed due to deterioration.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

CHANCE, ALBERT BISHOP, HOUSE AND GARDENS

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 3

Original Design. The entrance to the gardens is from the south, through a Japanese torii gateway. Stone steps descend to the floor of the garden, and winding paths, which are built of stone and seemingly placed at random, lead to the various parts of the gardens. Just at the foot of the steps is a natural stone bridge over a winding pool which resembles a natural lagoon. At one end of the lagoon originally was located a miniature lighthouse, four feet in height, with a rocky base. Fish and water lilies adorned the lagoon, and Chance designed a miniature replica of the island where Moses was found here complete with bullrushes, Nile flag and lotus. The floor of the garden was covered with a heavy carpet of brilliant green grass.

The rocks forming the shoulders and terraces of the garden include the native cathedral rock, a Missouri limestone type which weathers into forms resembling spires and battlements. Three waterfalls are located in the gardens, and the rocks associated with them are so placed that they have helped to create natural, water-cut channels running throughout the area.

Roughly in the center of the gardens, on the higher terrace, the rose garden was located which featured 46 species of roses. In the center of the roses, a golden gazing crystal lined with gold leaf reflected the entire garden to the viewer.

Pottery was an important part of the design of the Chance Gardens, and many shapes and sizes were featured. All of it was made in Missouri from local clays, and most of it was manufactured by the Kansas City Pottery Company.

The watering system received special attention in the Chance Gardens. It was designed by Chance so that each section could operate independently. Thus the water was used only where it was needed. Pumps circulated the water in the pool through waterfalls to add oxygen. In this way the water was recycled and the cost kept low. In addition, to insure the proper growing medium for each type of plant, each was planted in a special soil mixture suitable to its needs.

At the west end of the gardens is the Japanese pergola and the grotto. The pergola features side panels embellished with rising sun designs in stickwork and a broken tile floor. A case containing memorabilia from Chance's trip around the world is on its north side. North of the pergola is the grotto. From the exterior it appears to be a hill with a door in one side. The hill is covered with rocks and rare plants, and a waterfall trickles over the rocks to a pool. This structure is supported by a steel skeleton and concrete chinking, but it is constructed so that none of the supports are visible. The grotto is spot-lighted with white and colored lights to highlight the faceted calcite crystals which are sprinkled throughout its structure. Inside, a replica of the Taj Mahal in Agra, India,

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

CHANCE, ALBERT BISHOP, HOUSE AND GARDENS

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 4

which was carved from alabaster and set in a niche, was originally specially lit to resemble this building in the moonlight. The northern part of the gardens features a fountain of youth and a wishing well. The fountain of youth was constructed by Chance so that it was activated by an onlookers weight when he stepped on a certain spot. The wishing well is capped by a Moorish arch of Missouri limestone. Just to the east, a series of stone benches, also constructed of native rock, are arranged in a semi-circle. Bird baths are scattered throughout and a Japanese rose bower is located to the west. Another Japanese torii gate gives access to the street on the north, and on the east, the gardens are planted with trees, including Chinese elms, birches, conifers and Lombardy poplars.

Restoration and reconstruction. In 1970 the gardens were renovated. Leon C. Snyder, Jr. of the University of Missouri-Columbia, Department of Horticulture acted as landscape architect. Raymond Zierden, a rock garden builder from St. Paul, Minnesota, supervised the work. According to Snyder the gardens were in need of renovation for several reasons. The lily pond silted up every spring, electrical and mechanical parts were deteriorating and the water system was in need of repair. During the renovation, an attempt was made to retain the original attributes of the gardens wherever possible and to preserve the overall character of the area with special attention to the Japanese flavor in the pergola area. Native materials were used in accordance with the original wishes of Mr. Chance to emphasize Missouri's landscape and geology in his garden. The rock grotto, wishing well, torii gateways, stone benches and Japanese pergola were retained though the Taj Mahal replica had deteriorated and was removed. The lily pond was rebuilt and a rock garden composed of nearly 600 tons of native rock was completed. Marble from the quarries near Carthage, Missouri was used in the reconstruction of the garden's bridges, and bauxite from Arkansas replaced the flagstone walks which had badly deteriorated. A fence was added to the north as a screen to hide commercial buildings constructed since the gardens were originally designed. New automatic systems of underground lighting and watering were installed. Much of the garden pottery was removed to the safety of the Centralia Historical Society because vandalism had increased in the gardens. All the plants which were disturbed by the work necessary to implement these renovations were replanted after the work was completed.

SITE

The Chance House is located on a half block bounded by Sneed Street to the south Bradford Street to the east, and Singleton Street to the north in a residential area of the small town of Centralia, Missouri. A church is located immediately

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED
DATE ENTERED

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

CHANCE, ALBERT BISHOP, HOUSE AND GARDENS

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER

7

PAGE

5

to the east, the local middle school to the northeast and a small grocery store to the north. Immediately north of the house are the Chance Gardens.

PRESENT CONDITION AND STATUS

The Albert Bishop Chance House is presently the home of the Centralia Historical Society and is maintained as a community museum. The gardens are maintained by the Chance Foundation and remain open to the public free of charge. The members of both the historical society and the Chance Foundation are determined that the property be properly maintained and remain a part of the community's heritage.

FOOTNOTES

1. Information on the Chance Gardens is taken from Otha C. Spencer, "Garden of Ideals", St. Louis [Missouri] Globe Democrat, Sunday Magazine, September 27, 1953, "Garden Visited by Thousands", St. Louis [Missouri] Post-Dispatch, Sunday Pictures, July 20, 1941, Louis H. Frohman and Jean Elliot, A Pictorial Guide to American Gardens (Waukesha: Country Beautiful, 1969), p. 238, Garret B. Hardin, "Chance Gardens Being Renovated", Columbia [Missouri] Missourian, August 2, 1970, p. 2 and Carroll C. Calkins, ed., Great Gardens in America (New York: Coward-McCann, Inc., 1969), pp. 238-242.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE



**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

CHANCE, ALBERT BISHOP, HOUSE AND GARDENS

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 6 PAGE 1

2. A Pictorial Guide to American Gardens
1969
Published by: Country Beautiful
Waukesha
Wisconsin 53186
3. Missouri State Historical Survey
1978, 1979
Office of Historic Preservation
Department of Natural Resources
P.O. Box 176
Jefferson City
state
Missouri 65102

ITEM NUMBER 11 PAGE 1

2. Noelle Soren, Architectural Historian
Office of Historic Preservation
Department of Natural Resources
P.O. Box 176
Jefferson City
314/751-4096
Missouri 65102

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW

<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES House - 1904
Gardens - 1937

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Maude Dawson Taylor and
Gardens - Albert Bishop Chance

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Albert Bishop Chance House in Centralia, Missouri is significant as a notable example of Queen Anne Revival architecture in its locale. In addition, as the home of A.B. Chance, this site exemplifies the innovative mind of this noted American industrialist and inventor. Moreover, the Chance Gardens, which are located just north of the house, exhibit a design which inventively employs stone, wood, moving and still water, trees, flowers and plants, creating a variety of environments within a very limited space. Because of its unique position as a mid-Missouri country garden, this site has become an attraction for tourists from around the state and the nation.

This late example of Queen Anne Revival design was constructed for Robert L. and Belle Downing Hope as their home in 1904. Hope was born in Lewis County, Missouri on July 20, 1863 and attended college in Kirksville, Missouri. During this period he worked in a local drug store and learned the business. In 1885 he came to Centralia and opened his own pharmacy. He practiced as a druggist until 1935, served on the county hospital board and was president of the Missouri Pharmaceutical Association in 1903 and the Rexall Club in 1912.¹

The Hopes left the house in 1908 when it was purchased by Mr. Charles Early, the president of the Bank of Centralia. Mr. Early lived in the house until 1923 when it was purchased by A.B. Chance. It served as the Chance family home until the death of Mr. Chance in 1949.

Albert Bishop Chance was born in Centralia on May 26, 1873. As a boy, he was known as a tinkerer. He fathered many inventions and worked at the local Globe Hotel. In 1896 Albert Chance and his father, John, began installing the first telephone system in town. The main switchboard was located downtown, over O.G. Williams' Drugstore and the company was called the Centralia Telephone Company. In 1898 the Chance team built the first telephone exchange in Macon, Missouri and sold it to Theodore Gary who was on his way toward becoming a local telephone tycoon.² Through this period A.B. Chance was a stockholder in the company and a line repairman.³ In 1900 Mr. John Chance and his son strung the first telephone line between Centralia and Columbia.⁴ The company, which later became known as the Home Telephone Company, was sold by the Chance family in 1926. John Chance died in 1934.⁵

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

CHANCE, ALBERT BISHOP, HOUSE AND GARDENS

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 1

A.B. Chance, who had received local renown as a boy inventor, continued in the telephone business he had helped to build with his father until it was sold in 1926. Yet, he had additional interests as well. In 1907, in order to give form to his many inventions, A.B. Chance started a small manufacturing company in Centralia which was the basis for the future A.B. Chance Company.⁶ In addition, in 1910 he served as Mayor of his home town.⁷

In 1912, a particularly severe winter sleet storm provided the opportunity for A.B. Chance to become remembered in the history of modern technology. The storm toppled telephone poles and blew down telegraph lines all across central Missouri, many miles of which Chance had strung himself. To remedy the situation and keep his poles up in future storms, Chance invented the Never-Creep Anchor for telephone poles.⁸ The eventual world-wide success of this product and others of its type became the basis for the future development of the A.B. Chance Manufacturing Company in Centralia, Missouri.⁹

The little company grew steadily through the 1920's. A foundry was added in the middle of the decade, soon after the Chance Company entered the automotive supply business, first with piston rings, and later with a line of chemical products such as polishes and radiator sealers.¹⁰

The company was hit hard by the Depression. In 1929, for example, its sales totaled about \$700,000, but by 1932 the total had dropped to \$195,000. Due to frugal business practices and wise borrowing, however, not one of the company's employees was laid off, though some work weeks were very short. Throughout this crisis, A.B. Chance proved himself to be a generous man who personally helped his employees out with gifts of money and food, establishing patterns of intimate relations between the plant and the community which were to characterize the A.B. Chance Company in later years.¹²

The decades from the Depression to the 1970's saw the expansion of the A.B. Chance Company in size, diversification of utility product lines and intensification of its role in the national economy.¹³ In 1932 the company incorporated, and for the first time stock was sold outside of the family. In 1934 the company made its first acquisition, the Wej-Lok Anchor Company of Winterset, Iowa. In 1937 the Tips Tool Company of Taylorville, Illinois, manufacturer of "hot line" tools which enable linemen to work on power lines without cutting the power, was acquired. Today most of the world's hot line equipment comes from Centralia, Missouri.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

CHANCE, ALBERT BISHOP, HOUSE AND GARDENS

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER

8

PAGE

2

During World War II the Chance Company made airplane parts at first. As the war progressed, however, and the advancing Allied Forces needed equipment to rebuild power and communication lines, the company gradually reverted to the manufacture of its own anchors, lance poles, cable chairs and other products for the Signal Corps.

With the War's end came the decision to concentrate the efforts of the company in the utilities business. An ambitious expansion program followed with more acquisitions, additions to the engineering staff, entry into the export field with the formation of a Canadian subsidiary and the establishment of a small export sales department which has grown into the company's present International Division. In 1945, the Bonnie Switch Company of San Francisco was acquired and in 1948, the large Baily Electrical Complex on the West Coast was added.

The 1950's were characterized by a further expansion of staff and test facilities. Acquisitions continued, however, with the W.H. Matthews Corporation of St. Louis and the Specialty Device Company of Cincinnati, both in 1953. In 1955 the Chance Company acquired the Seyler Company of Pittsburgh, a manufacturer of pole hardware.

In 1961 the Pitman Manufacturing Company of Grandview, Missouri, a fabricator of hydraulically powered equipment, was acquired. The same year a modern, engineering research center in Centralia was completed equipped to proof-test new products and product improvements. Today it is one of the most complete electro-mechanical facilities of its type in the world. The Union Pole Bracket Company, a maker of steel poles, was acquired in 1967 and the acquisition of the Cortran Manufacturing Company and the Washington Electrical Products Company in Washington, Missouri in 1968 gave the Chance Company a foothold in the \$400,000,000-a-year transformer industry.

In addition to the Never-Creep Anchor, one of the major developments made by Chance Company research was Epoxiglas plastic insulation for hot line tools manufactured from plastic foam, fiberglass and epoxy resin. The process for the fabrication of this product is patented, and its development was a major reason for the success of the company after World War II. This success enabled the sales of the company to grow from \$4,000,000 in 1946 to the \$70,000,000+ level in 1969.

In 1974-1975 the Chance Company changed its role and was itself acquired by the Emerson Electric Company of St. Louis,¹⁴ yet it remains today one of the most important industries in central Missouri and the hub of activity in Centralia.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

CHANCE, ALBERT BISHOP, HOUSE AND GARDENS

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 3

In addition to its 1,500 employees in four Missouri cities, it employs over 1,000 more in other operations in California, Oregon, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Texas and its Mexican and Canadian subsidiaries.

Since Chance was an inventor who was forever trying new ideas, it is not surprising that several features, innovative for their day, were to be found in this house. These include a bread board which recessed into the wall of the kitchen at the touch of a button and an ironing board which descended from its closet at a touch with its accompanying iron already heating. In addition, Chance installed a fan in the attic which drew smoke and odors from the kitchen range up a vent and out of the house. Other innovations introduced by Chance into this house included a central vacuum system, an automatic water heater, a water softener, an x-ray machine, a dark room and a chemical laboratory. All of these conveniences were designed and installed by Chance at a time when many homes of residents of rural Missouri lacked electricity. Most of these features have been removed over the years.

The Chance House is also significant as the site of the Chance Gardens, a horticultural attraction built by the Chance family and open freely to the public as an expression of gratitude to the community for its support of the Chance Company over the years. In 1927, Chance took a world tour. He was impressed by the gardens he saw, and, upon his return, he built one of his own so that "those passing may stop, rest, reflect and enjoy."¹⁵ Soon more than 10,000 persons a year visited the gardens from all over the world as the area became a major tourist attraction in the region.

The gardens were designed by Maude Dawson Taylor, a landscape architect based in Kansas City, Missouri, after designs by Mr. Chance. Mrs. Taylor owned and operated the Silhouette Gardens in Kansas City.¹⁶

The survey of Missouri's historic sites is based on their selection as they relate to theme studies in Missouri history as outlined in "Missouri's State Historic Preservation Plan". The Albert Bishop Chance House and Gardens therefore, is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places as an example of the themes of "Architecture", "Landscape Architecture" and "Technology".

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

CHANCE, ALBERT BISHOP, HOUSE AND GARDENS

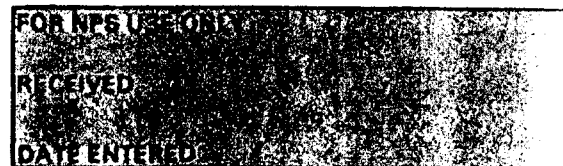
CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 4

FOOTNOTES

1. Edgar T. Rodemyre, History of Centralia, Missouri (Centralia: Fireside Guard, 1936), p. 335.
2. Theodore Gary is notable as the developer of the telephone industry in Missouri and Kansas. He was born in 1854 in Ohio and moved to Macon, Missouri in 1876. He was employed first as a lightening rod installer and then later became a successful banker and real estate speculator. In 1899 he purchased the local exchange from the Chance family. In his later years he was responsible for the organization of many independent exchanges in Topeka, Kansas; Nevada, Missouri; and Joplin, Missouri. He utilized his real estate assets as investments in his phone companies and developed independent exchanges because he had no confidence in large trusts. General History of Macon County, Missouri (Chicago: Henry Taylor and Co., 1910), pp. 351-355.
3. Missouri, Mother of the West, Volume III, (Chicago: American Historical Society, Inc., 1930), p. 150.
4. Bill Vaughan, "Serving America's Lifeline", Chanco News (June, 1957), p. 5.
5. F. Gano Chance, The Ideas That Guide Us (New York: Newcomen Society, 1968), n.p. and Edgar Rodemyre, History of Centralia, Missouri, p. 305.
6. Centralia, Missouri Centennial, 1857-1957 (Centralia: Guard Printing and Publishing Co., 1957), p. 63.
7. Bill Vaughan, "Serving America's Lifeline", p. 7.
8. Ibid., p. 6. The anchor employed an ever-so-simple principle for providing maximum stability without necessitating a great deal of digging in frozen ground. A small hole was dug in the ground near the pole to be stabilized and at a 45° angle to it. A log, and later on as technology advanced, a heavy metal post, was inserted in the hole to a specified depth. A metal rod was bored through the ground over the log and through the log, at right angles to it. Then the hole was filled in so that the log was securely buried. Finally, a guide wire was strung from the top of the telephone pole to a loop on the rod at ground level, securing the pole.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE



**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

CHANCE, ALBERT BISHOP, HOUSE AND GARDENS

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 5

9. F. Gano Chance, The Ideas That Guide Us, n.p.
10. "A.B. Chance Serves the World", Chanco News (April, 1970), p. 9.
11. Ibid.
12. Bil Vaughan, "Serving America's Lifeline", p. 10. One manifestation of this policy is the company's profit sharing plan which was instituted in 1939. It is in the form of a savings and profit sharing trust fund to which both employees and the company contribute in order to build employees retirement savings. At the end of the first year the fund totalled \$8,000. Thirty years later it had topped the \$9,000,000 level. Charter members still active have accounts in the \$50,000 to \$100,000 range.
13. The following history of the development of the Chance Company is taken from F. Gano Chance, The Ideas That Guide Us, n.p. and Bill Vaughan, "Serving America's Lifeline", p. 10.
14. A.B. Chance Company, Annual Report (Centralia: A.B. Chance Company, 1974), p. 2.
15. Carroll C. Calkins, Great Gardens of America (New York: Coward-McCann Inc., 1969), p. 238.
16. Information supplied by the Centralia Historical Society, Centralia, Missouri. Unfortunately, no further information about this woman is available from local or published sources.

CHANCE, ALBERT BISHOP, HOUSE AND GARDENS

#378

COUNTY:

Boone

LOCATION:

Centralia

OWNER:

Chance Foundation "Boone International"

ADDRESS:

Rollins Street
Centralia, Mo.

DATE APPROVED BY A.C.:

April 27, 1979

DATE SENT TO D.C.:

May 7, 1979

DATE OF REC. IN D.C.:

May 9, 1979

DATE PLACED ON NATIONAL REGISTER:

July 3, 1979

DATE CERTIFICATE AWARDED
(AND PRESENTOR):

January 7, 1980
Patrick Brennan

DATE FILE REVIEWED:

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

1. A.B. Chance Company Annual Report. Centralia, 1974.
2. "A.B. Chance Serves the World", Chanco News (April, 1970), 7-13.
3. Calkins, Carroll C. Great Gardens in America. New York: Coward-McCann, 1969.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY Less than one (31,200 square feet)

QUADRANGLE NAME "Centralia, Mo."

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24,000

UTM REFERENCES

A 15 574730 4340235

B

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C

D

E

F

G

H

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Lots One (1), Two (2), Three (3), Four (4) and Five (5), all in Block Twenty-eight (28) of the original town, now City of Centralia, Boone County, Missouri together with all improvements thereon.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
-------	------	--------	------

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
-------	------	--------	------

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

1. Mrs. Annabel Howard, Mrs. Ruth Miller
Ms. Maryellen H. McVicker

ORGANIZATION

Centralia Historical Society

DATE

STREET & NUMBER

319 East Sneed Street

TELEPHONE

314/682-5711

CITY OR TOWN

Centralia

STATE

Missouri 65240

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE X

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

TITLE Director, Department of Natural Resources and
State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

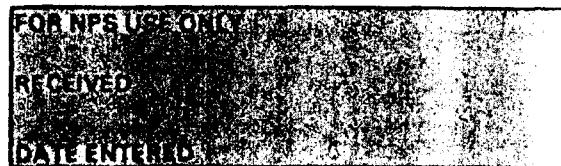
DATE

ATTEST: KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE



**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

CHANCE, ALBERT BISHOP, HOUSE AND GARDENS

CONTINUATION SHEET

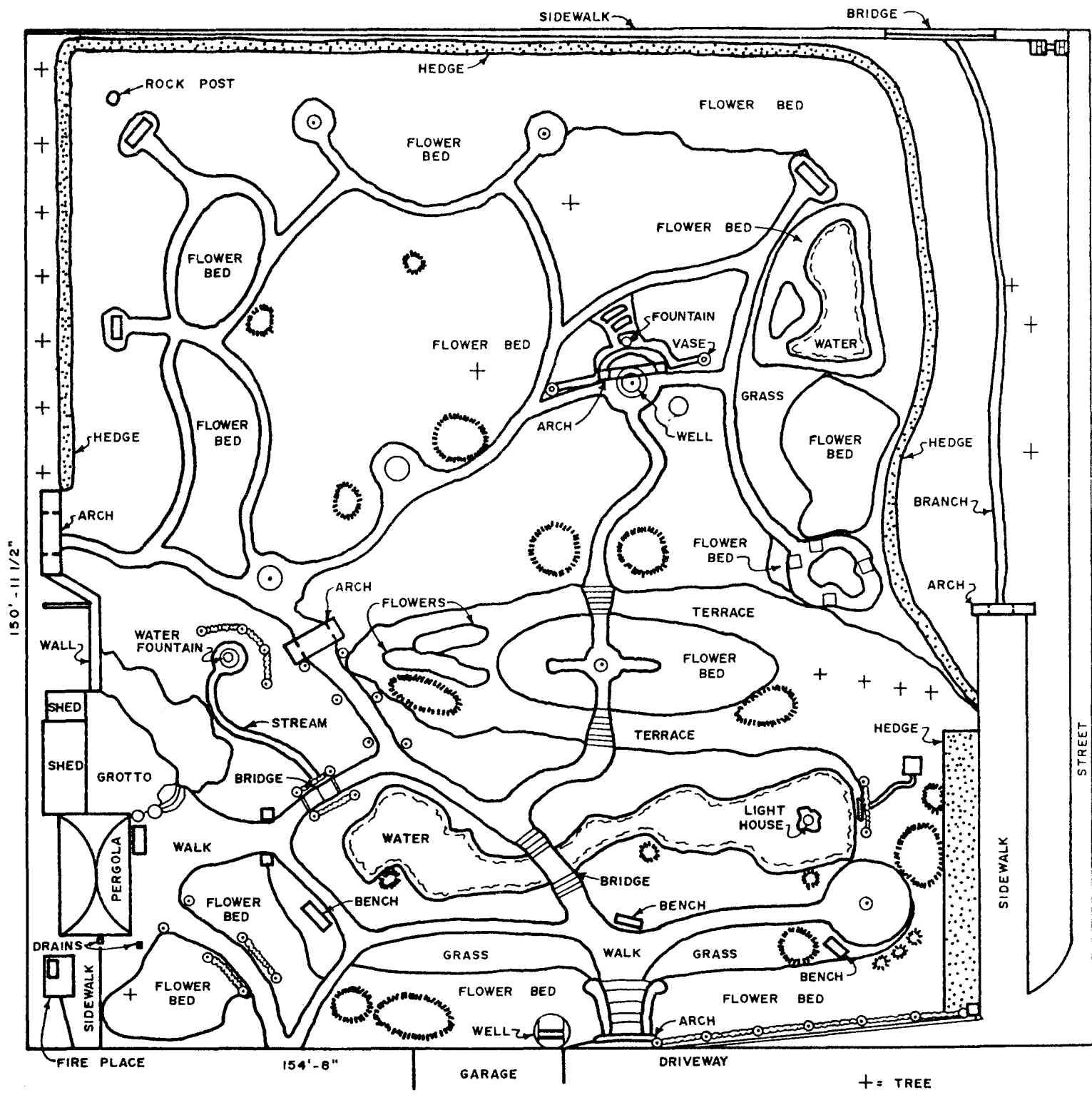
ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 1

4. Centralia, Missouri Centennial, 1857-1957. Centralia: Guard Printing Co., 1957.
5. Chance, F. Gano. The Ideas That Guide Us. New York: Newcomen Society, 1968.
6. Frohman, Louis H. and Elliot, Jean. A Pictorial Guide to American Gardens. Waukeshau: Country Beautiful, 1969.
7. "Garden Visited by Thousands", St. Louis [Missouri] Post-Dispatch, Sunday Pictures, July 20, 1941.
8. General History of Macon County, Missouri. Chicago: Henry Taylor and Co., 1910.
9. Hardin, Garret B. "Chance Gardens Being Renovated", Columbia [Missouri] Missourian, August 2, 1970, p. 2.
10. Information supplied by the Centralia Historical Society, Centralia, Missouri.
11. Missouri, Mother of the West, 3 Volumes. Chicago: American Historical Society, Inc., 1930.
12. Rodemyre, Edgar. History of Centralia, Missouri. Centralia: Fireside Guard, 1936.
13. Spencer, Otha C. "Garden of Ideals", St. Louis [Missouri] Globe Democrat, Sunday Magazine, September 27, 1953.
14. Vaughan, Bill. "Serving America's Lifeline", Chanco News (June, 1957), 1-15.

SITE PLAN MAP (PRIOR TO RESTORATION)
A. B. CHANCE ROCK GARDEN
CENTRALIA, MISSOURI

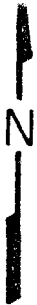


NOT TO SCALE



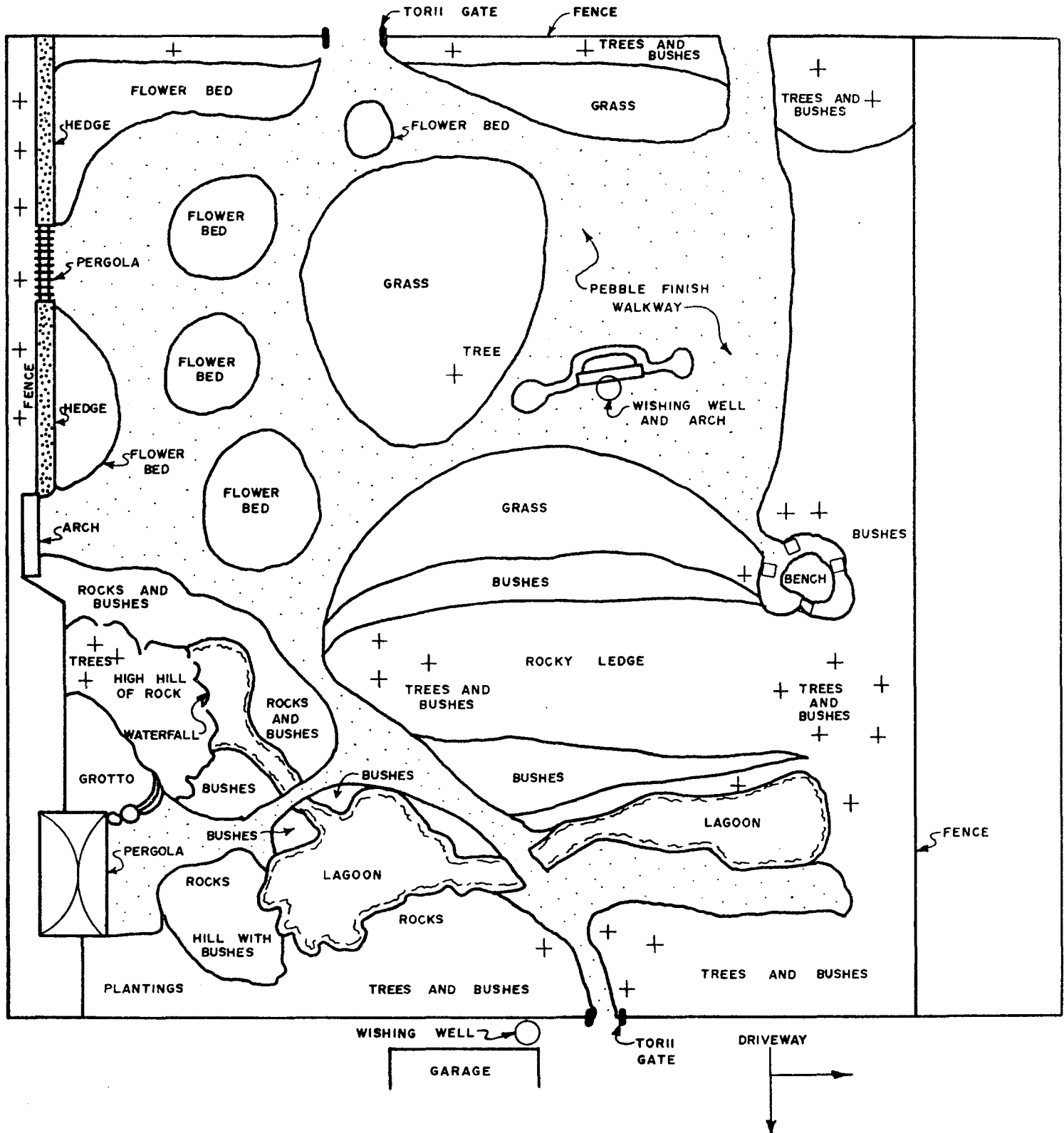
+ = TREE

SITE PLAN MAP (APPROXIMATE PLAN AFTER REVISION)
A. B. CHANCE GARDENS
CENTRALIA, MISSOURI

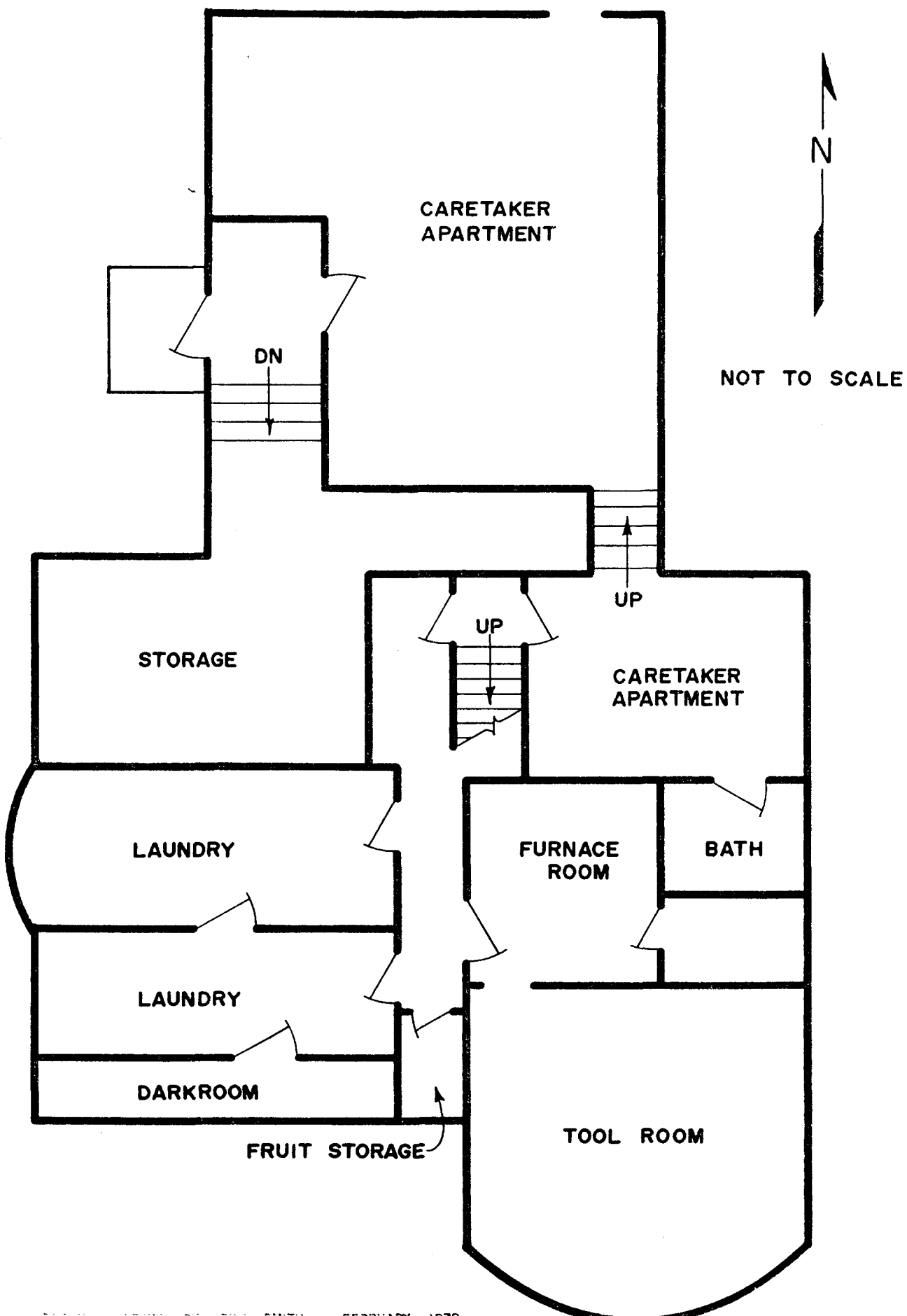


NOT TO SCALE

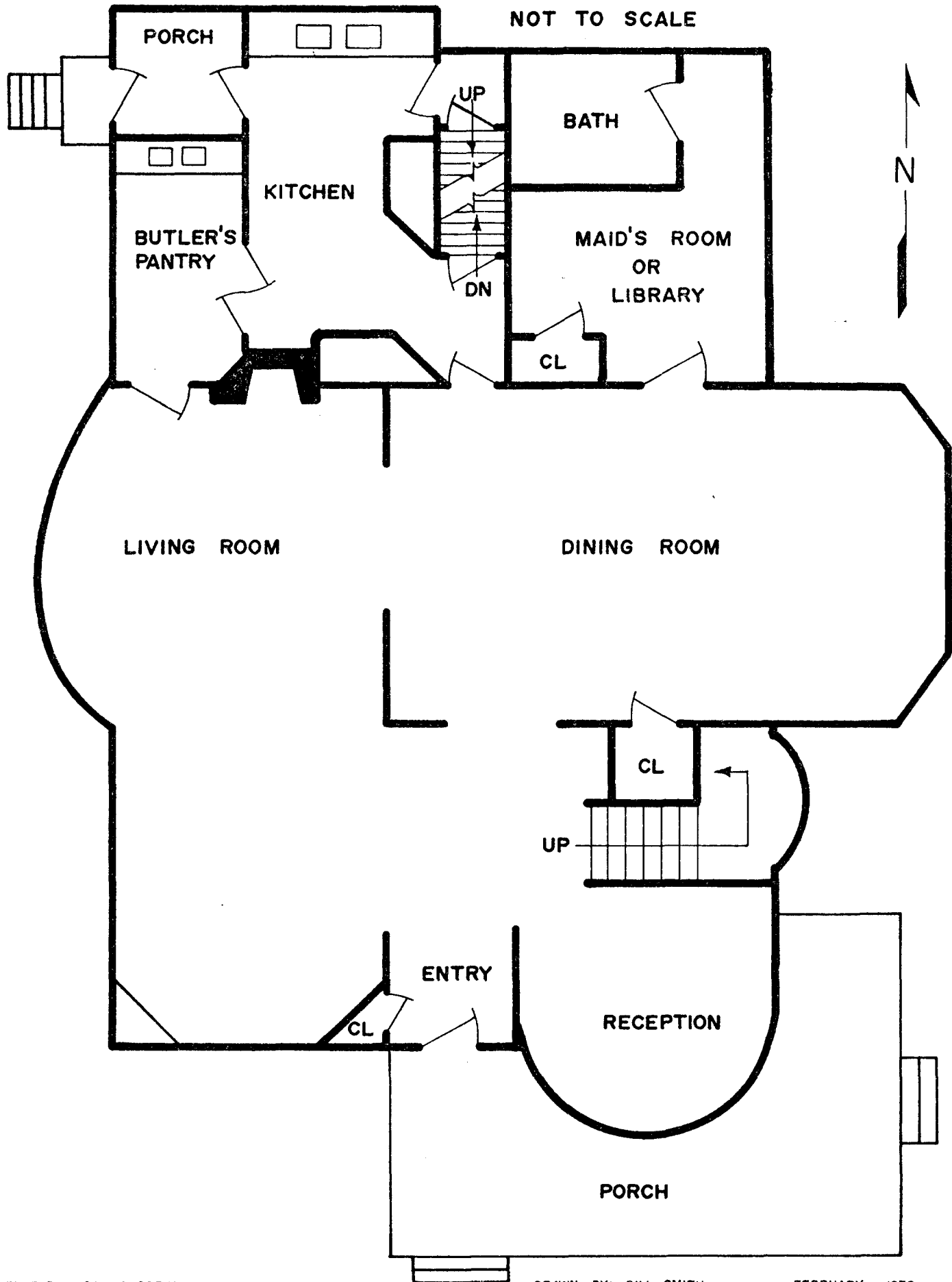
STREET



CENTRALIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY MUSEUM
(A.B. CHANCE HOUSE)
CENTRALIA, MISSOURI

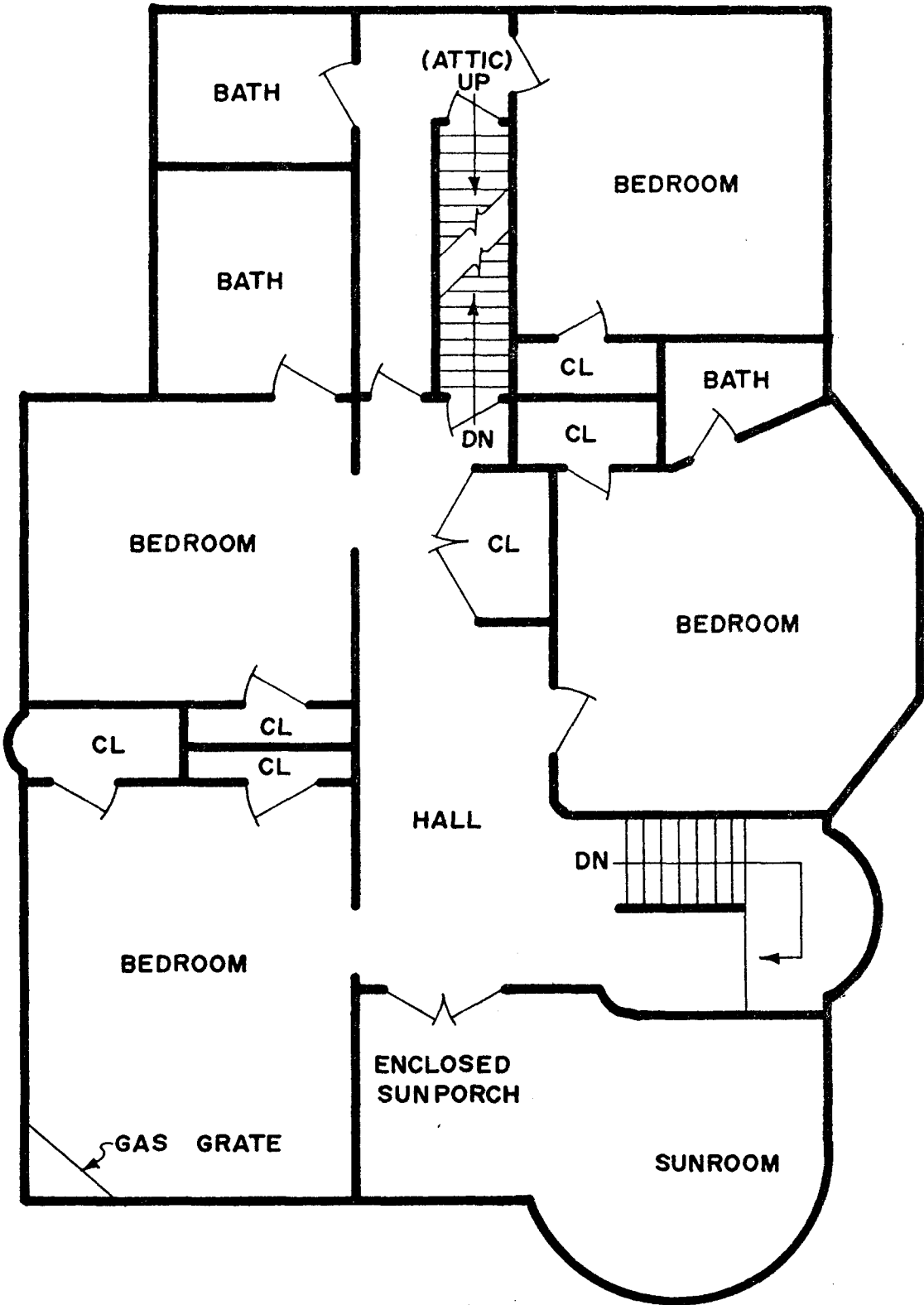


FIRST FLOOR PLAN
CENTRALIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY MUSEUM
(A.B. CHANCE HOUSE)
CENTRALIA, MISSOURI



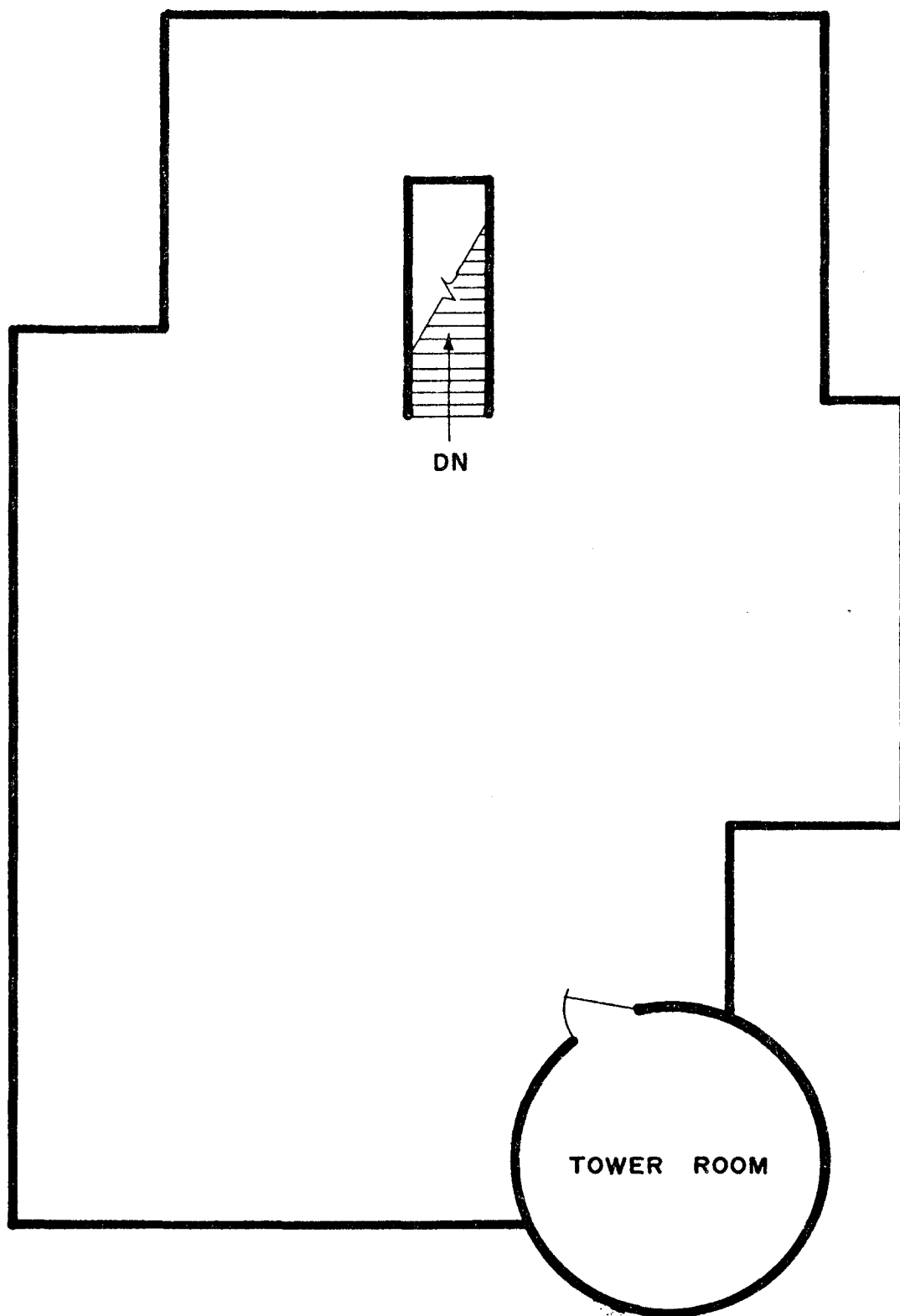
SECOND FLOOR PLAN
CENTRALIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY MUSEUM
(A.B. CHANCE HOUSE)
CENTRALIA, MISSOURI

NOT TO SCALE



ATTIC PLAN
CENTRALIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY MUSEUM
(A.B. CHANCE HOUSE)
CENTRALIA, MISSOURI

NOT TO SCALE



The Albert Bishop Chance House in Centralia, Missouri is significant as a notable example of Queen Anne Revival architecture in its locale. In addition, as the home of A.B. Chance, this site exemplifies the innovative mind of this noted American industrialist and inventor. Moreover the Chance Gardens which are located just north of the house, exhibit a design which inventively employs stone, wood, moving and still water, trees, flowers and plants, creating a variety of environments within a very limited space. Because of its unique position as a mid-Missouri country garden, this site has become an attraction for tourists from around the state and the nation.









